

AAESA'S ROLE IN ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT

Wanda Meisner

Background

In response to the June 1986 Packard Commission Report, the president of the United States, through National Security Decision Directive Number 219, directed the Secretary of Defense and the military secretaries to establish a program executive office (PEO) structure. The Defense Management Review (DMR) outlined how funding and personnel management for PEOs and their assigned project/product managers (PMs) would be managed separately from Service commands. To comply with the DMR, the Army Acquisition Executive Support Agency (AAESA) was established in May 1990 to provide the customer service necessary for total manpower, personnel, and force structure support.

Program executive officers are chartered with the Army's acquisition mission to ensure world-class equipment is provided for the Army's transformation to the objective force—a force that will embody the decisive warfighting capabilities of today's mechanized forces and the strategic responsiveness of today's light forces. Throughout the years, the PEO structure has been streamlined from 22 PEOs in 1987 to the current 7 PEOs.

Introduction

As the Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE's) agent, AAESA is re-

sponsible for achieving military supremacy through acquisition life-cycle management of major and significant nonmajor weapons and information systems and implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). The AAESA Director is the co-chair of the Total Army Analysis (TAA) Acquire, Maintain, and Sustain Equipment Panel. In that capacity, the director captures the total requirements by military, civilian, and contractor categories for the acquisition community. The objectives are to develop allocation rules, standardize unit designs, and achieve horizontal integration. The Personnel Management (PE) and Resource Management (RM) Divisions serve as the major command (MACOM) and acquisition community focal point for all TAA issues related to analysis, input, and rebuttal for potentially adverse decisions during the TAA process.

AAESA provides organizational support to the Acquisition Career Management Office (ACMO); U.S. Total Army Personnel Command's (PERSCOM's) Acquisition Management Branch (AMB); Combined Arms Support Command; Center for Army Lessons Learned; Command and General Staff College; Contract Support Agency; Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency; Defense Systems Management College Army

Chair; Future Combat Systems Task Force; Research, Development and Acquisition Information Systems Activity (RDAISA); Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD); Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASAALT); Director of Information Systems for Command, Control, Communications, and Computers; Special Operations Command; and Total Ownership Cost Reduction.

Force Structures (FS) Division

The FS Division has overall management responsibility for the General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC), which enables the Army to continuously review programs in the PEO structure and all other PM and acquisition command positions. The GOSC makes recommendations to the AAE on revalidating, establishing, disestablishing, merging, downgrading, and upgrading acquisition programs and commands. The end product is the Command Selection List (CSL), which identifies positions in the category of "best qualified" or "military only" for fill by HQDA Centralized PM and Acquisition Command Selection Boards. An integrated process team—consisting of members from the ACMO, AMB, and AAESA's PE and RM Divisions—reviews, validates, and develops positions for review by the Director, Acquisition Career Management

(DACM). Once approved by the DACM, the recommended positions are forwarded to the GOSC.

The FS Division is also responsible for the following:

- Planning the annual Army Acquisition Workshop and Executive Sessions and Program Executive Officer/Deputy for Systems Acquisition (DSA) Day, which are forums that allow open discussions and interactions between PMs, Army acquisition commanders, and senior Army leadership.

- Leading the research, analysis, and coordination of all Senior Executive Service (SES) actions under the purview of the ASAALT. The PE Division supports the SES evaluation program, and the FS Division serves as the lead in responding to congressional inquiries relating to organizational structure changes.

- Maintaining the accuracy of the Acquisition Commanders and Senior Managers Directory, which is available online at <http://aaesa.rdaisa.army.mil>. This directory provides contact information for key personnel throughout the acquisition commands. The FS Division also maintains a similar, yet unique, acquisition database to that of AMB. These databases track the status of PMs and CSL positions with data pertinent to each organization's mission. Both organizations share data that impact PM assignments, rotation dates, and force structure issues.

- Preparing charters for program executive officers, DSAs, and board-select PMs that reflect the duties and responsibilities assigned to them by the AAE. Additionally, the FS Division assists in processing and coordinating critical acquisition position tenure waivers submitted to the Military Deputy (MILDEP) to the AAE for approval.

PE Division

The PE Division is responsible for overseeing agency civilian and military personnel management and

supporting the ACMO, AMB, and the FS Division in military and civilian acquisition career management, acquisition organization structure, and DAWIA implementation. The PE Division designs and executes all AAESA personnel management programs and provides staff-level personnel policy advice and guidance to the AAE, HQDA, PEOs, and other senior leaders. The division serves as the OSD and HQDA point of contact (POC) for military and civilian personnel reporting requirements. The division also implements AAE personnel management policies and decisions to maximize the effectiveness of AAESA civilian and military personnel.

The PE Division's military personnel management functions include:

- Provide staff-level advice and guidance to all AAESA elements;
- Formulate, execute, and evaluate the AAESA Acquisition Position List (APL);
- Provide monthly military personnel database requisition information;
- Work with AMB to maintain AAESA's operating strength;
- Identify, defend, and coordinate AAESA's Officer Distribution Plan requirements;
- Ensure that HQDA Centralized Selection Board lists are distributed to program executive officers and PMs;
- Maintain Officer Evaluation Report System Management Plan data for the MILDEP; and
- Provide oversight for AAESA's personnel tempo implementation.

The PE Division's civilian personnel management functions include:

- Provide staff-level advice and guidance to all AAESA elements;
- Serve as lead for the annual AAESA Civilian Execution Plan identifying projected strength levels and potential reductions-in-force;

- Serve as command POC for the APL;

- Manage the AAE delegation of classification authority program;
- Maintain position requirement documents and position descriptions;
- Manage the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay Programs;
- Issue a quarterly civilian personnel database report; and
- Provide recruitment and placement, management-employee relations support, and position management support.

The PE Division assists the Competitive Development Group (CDG) Program by working with the ACMO, regional offices, and Civilian Personnel Advisory Centers (CPACs) throughout the country to ensure that every CDG participant is adequately supported.

The division also assists the Acquisition Education, Training and Experience (AETE) Program. When a rotating PM or another employee is selected for long-term training (LTT), the individual is placed on the AAESA Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA). The employee remains on the AAESA TDA until the LTT has been successfully completed.

The PE Division works closely with AMB when the PM Board has selected a civilian and coordinates with AMB, the PEO or MACOM, and the servicing CPAC to establish the position as a civilian slot. Additional assistance is provided to the gaining organization in clearing the Priority Placement Program stopper list.

The PE Division currently serves as a civilian personnel consultant on matters concerning the Acquisition Workforce Demonstration Project for both the HQDA Acquisition Demonstration Project Office and the Deputy Director for Acquisition Career Management/AAESA pay pool. As such, division personnel provide expert guidance on

recruitment processes, classification issues, and Contribution-based Compensation and Appraisal System (CCAS) procedures and maintain the CCAS pay pool database.

RM Division

The RM Division is responsible for resourcing, financial management, and oversight of manpower for PEOs and PMs. HQDA approves one TDA for all AAESA elements, which allows AAESA leadership to effectively manage all programs. These include planning, programming, and defending the organization's manpower resources by carefully scrutinizing requirements and authorizations.

The RM Division acts as financial advisor, budget POC, banker, funds certifier, and accountant. It supports the ACMO by preparing permanent change of station orders, certifying training and travel requests for AETE (including the Army Tuition Assistance Program), and certifying funding requests for CDGs.

In addition to the above, the RM Division is responsible for:

- Planning and programming funds for AAESA and its customers, including the Acquisition Information Management Office, RDAISA, and ACMO; receiving and interpreting directives concerning preparation, planning, programming, formulation, justification, presentation, and execution of appropriated fund budgets; instructing customers on the preparation and submission of Program Objective Memorandums; and providing information for the budget estimate submission and president's budget.

- Executing and managing military-specific allotment, Joint Tactical Radio Systems, Future Combat Systems, and Civilian Acquisition Demonstration Project dollars; and assisting Office of the ASAALT personnel in processing financial documents relative to contractual services, travel, and training.

AAESA frequently interfaces with the acquisition community to identify future requirements, which ultimately impact the acquisition force structure.

- Managing and distributing operations and maintenance and other Army funds to PEOs and PMs and serving as PEO POCs for the Army's Joint Reconciliation Program (JRP). (JRP entails identifying the Army's dollar obligation and disbursement problems, which stem from erroneous posting of financial documents and cause backlogs of negative unliquidated obligations.) Additionally, AAESA interfaces with HQDA and the PEOs to ensure that PEOs are meeting Army goals.

The RM Division is responsible for the Army Materiel Systems Analysis Activity (AMSAA) manpower studies. The studies, using the Army's 12-step process, validated and documented AAESA's organizational requirements and tied workload to the "total" required staffing resources. Also, the AMSAA studies became and will continue to be a valuable tool during AAESA's annual TDA review. The AMSAA studies identified Army baseline manpower requirements for FY99 as the first phase in the study process. The next phase is the development of Predictive Staffing Models (PSMs) for all Army PMs. Labor consumption indicators and data will be collected from the PMs and used to develop PSMs. Once developed, the PSMs will help

justify future manpower requirements during the TAA process.

To accomplish AAESA's diversified mission, formal and informal communications are crucial. Each division keeps open lines of communication to the acquisition community. Annual staff assistance visits to PEOs are a prime example of open communications and are designed to learn how to best serve our customer—an excellent forum to exchange information. The monthly AAESA newsletter provides information on current and upcoming events within the acquisition community and may be viewed on the AAESA home page at <http://aaesa.rdaisa.army.mil>. (Click on News, then click on AAESA News.)

Conclusion

AAESA's primary mission is life-cycle management of Defense acquisition programs. These programs are a directed and funded effort that is designed to provide a new, improved, or continuing weapons system or automated information system capability in response to a validated operational need. AAESA frequently interfaces with the acquisition community to identify future requirements, which ultimately impact the acquisition force structure. AAESA is an integrated team focused on the Army's transformation goal—the objective force.

WANDA MEISNER is the Program Executive Officer/PM Support Manager at AAESA. She has a B.S. in business studies from the University of Maryland and is Level III certified in both program management and acquisition logistics.
